

Serial No. 10/603,625
Amendment
Responsive to Final Office Action dated August 18, 2008

Docket No. KAS-183

REMARKS

Pending Claims

Claims 1-6 are pending in this application. Claim 6 has been amended. No new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, for failing to comply with the written description requirement, and under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph for being indefinite. Applicants have amended claim 6 to overcome the rejections and therefore request reconsideration.

In particular, applicants have amended claim 6 to set forth an analysis unit button that sets the analysis units to an active mode or a power-off enable mode. Support for the amendment to the claim is provided in the Specification, for example. See page 7, lines 10-13 and Figure 3, item 301. Note the button 301 for analysis unit 2 shown in diagonal cross hatching to match the power-off enable key shown with similar cross hatching. Accordingly, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112 should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Ohishi et al, U.S. Patent No. 6,019,945. Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection in view of the foregoing amendments and for the following reasons.

Serial No. 10/603,625
Amendment
Responsive to Final Office Action dated August 18, 2008

Docket No. KAS-183

The Examiner set forth in the response to arguments section of the Office Action that the Ohishi reference is not silent in its disclosure with respect to a discussion regarding the separation of an analysis unit from an information network, as claimed by applicants. In particular, the Examiner relies upon the disclosure by Ohishi in column 10, lines 1-23 wherein it is stated that the control unit has the ability of disassociating the analysis unit with the abnormality from the host control computer (40) by instructing another analysis unit to take over the abnormal analysis unit's operation. The Examiner further argues that the reference discloses the separating of one of the analysis units from the information network inherently since Ohishi discloses that the host control computer has the ability to execute operation control of each analysis portion, the rack transfer system, and other necessary portions in the system.

However, applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's assertion that the host control computer 40 that is connected to the respective analysis units executes operation control of each analysis portion that includes separating one of the analysis units from the information network to enable shutoff of a power supply to the analysis units while other analysis units are maintained connected to the information network. The host control computer 40 of Ohishi is disclosed as executing operation control of each analysis portion, rack transfer system and other necessary portions in the system, as stated in the Office Action, however none of these functions is disclosed as including separating an analysis unit from the information network to enable shut off of a power supply to the analysis unit while other analysis units are maintained connected to the information network.

Serial No. 10/603,625
Amendment
Responsive to Final Office Action dated August 18, 2008

Docket No. KAS-183

One having ordinary skill in the art would realize that in Ohishi that the operator of the Ohishi automatic analyzer would shut off the power supply of the entire sample analysis system in order to remove the analysis unit if an abnormality arises in the analysis unit. There is no disclosure by Ohishi of enabling the shut off of a power supply to one of the analysis units while the other analysis units are maintained connected to the information network by separating one of the analysis units from the information network, as claimed by applicants. Accordingly, the reference does not disclose or suggest the central control device claimed by applicants in claims 1 and 6.

Claims 3-5 additionally set forth a mode setting screen for displaying the conveying unit and the analysis units. The Examiner relies upon Ohishi for disclosing in column 4, lines 47-50 an operator panel that is relied upon in the rejection for specifying any one of the displayed conveying line and a displayed analysis unit. However, Ohishi discloses that the host controlled computer 40 is provided with a memory portion 45, and is connected to an operator panel 42 for data entry, a CRT 43 for information display and a printer 44 for output of the result of measurement. There is no disclosure by Ohishi of the elements of the invention claimed in claims 3-5 with respect to a mode setting screen which includes displaying the conveying unit and the analysis units for specifying any one of the display conveying unit and the displayed analysis unit to be separated from the information network by the central control device. Accordingly, Ohishi does not anticipate claims 3-5.

Claim 2 is not anticipated by Ohishi, at least for being dependent from base claim 1, accordingly, the rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) should also be withdrawn.

Serial No. 10/603,625

Docket No. KAS-183

Amendment

Responsive to Final Office Action dated August 18, 2008

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Mattingly, Stanger, Malur & Brundidge, P.C.

By John R. Mattingly Reg. No. 62,484
for John R. Mattingly
Reg. No. 30,293
Telephone: (703) 684-1120

Date: February 18, 2009